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MEDIA RELEASE

New Leader for St Vincent de Paul

Long-time Wellington Vincentian Terry Jordan has been elected as the Society's new National President.

Terry has been a member of the Conference in Waiwhetu, Lower Hutt, since 2008 and has held leadership roles at Conference, Area Council and National Board levels.

"I see my membership of the Society as a practical expression of my faith," says Terry. "The Letter of James says, 'Faith without works is dead'. St Vincent de Paul is the 'works' by which my faith is strengthened and sustained."

Terry is married to Julie and has seven children and 14 grandchildren. Terry is an accountant with broad commercial experience. He has recently retired from his role as Operations Manager for the Insurance Council of New Zealand where he worked for many years with every level of the industry and Government.

Terry says the St Vincent de Paul Society is not just another welfare organisation.

"We are an evangelising society where we take Christ to the people we serve. In meeting their needs through material help, we must seek to meet their spiritual needs as well. As we look into the eyes of those we serve and they look into ours, our common vision must be of Christ."

The Society's prime work of helping the poor takes place at Conference and Area levels, says Terry. This work needs to be supported by a professional central administration which can deal with an increasingly complex compliance and regulatory environment.

"As President I see it as vital that we manage the commercial and regulatory realities professionally and accurately so we can provide a seamless service to those who are privileged to serve."

Terry sees the need for a Society that is "agile enough to meet the ever-changing current needs of the poor and adaptable enough to meet even the unknown future needs. Covid puts us on notice that we need to be ready for anything."

To achieve this, he advocates more training for all areas of the Society to increase skills, knowledge and the confidence of members. He would also like to see a high level of transparency around decision-making and effective communication between National Council members and the grassroots level.

Terry says that one of the most important Board roles will be addressing the declining membership of the Society. He says it is a challenging task with "an increasingly secular society, smaller numbers of worshippers and reducing numbers of parishes". He plans to get feedback on the best ideas currently in action for building and strengthening Conferences and share and encourage the implementation of those ideas widely.

For more information:

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MEMBRE DE LA SOCIETE
DE SAINT-VINCENT DE PAUL

